

The Times-Dispatch

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SATURDAY, DECEMBER 21, 1912.

A BAD BEGINNING.

The Administrative Board was established by the people of Richmond for the purpose of securing efficiency in their city government, but a majority of its members yesterday deliberately disregarded that duty by electing John E. Butler to the office of Building Inspector. They refused to elect an efficient man who was recommended by the architects and other experts as the best available person for the position. They elected a bricklayer to an office which requires wide and thorough technical knowledge and skill. They turned deaf ear to the appeals of the architects, the builders and the property owners of Richmond that no inefficient man should be entrusted to an office which has a direct and vital bearing upon almost \$30,000,000 of real estate value. They laid the responsibility for safeguarding human life through safe buildings, not upon the shoulders of a man of expert knowledge, but upon those of a former employee of the Building Inspector's office, who was discharged for neglect of duty and drunkenness. The Administrative Board has willfully violated its plain duty to the people. Its members, in their first important official act, put personal choice above the people's interest. Let them consider that the office of Building Inspector has been efficiently administered because the people demanded when it was created that it should have an efficient incumbent. The Administrative Board did not feel the pulse of the people before electing Mr. Butler; the City Council did before choosing Mr. Beck, and that is why a less efficient man was not chosen. The board has wholly mistaken its duty, if it believes that it is elected to conduct the administrative business of the city without reference to the city's interests.

It is not too late for the Administrative Board to reconsider its action yesterday. Why should it not give the citizens an opportunity of expressing their opinion as to the wisdom of the board's action? If Mr. Butler can stand and pass a thorough examination for the position to which he has been chosen, then he should become Building Inspector, and if he cannot meet the test, he ought not to be elected. If he can demonstrate his efficiency, the fact that he is the personal choice of the Administrative Board should not bar him from office, but if he is only its personal choice and not an efficient man, he should not become Building Inspector. Unless it wishes to stand condemned by public opinion, the Administrative Board should reconsider.

COMMISSION REPLIES.

The most significant feature of the recent report to Congress by the Interstate Commerce Commission is to be found in the section in which advances in freight rates are discussed. Although there is no direct reference to the matter, the commission has evidently made note of the criticism of railroad managers to the effect that it has presented the railroads from making legitimate advances in freight rates. This is evident from the commission's defense of its rate-suspension policy.

The review of its attitude and its decisions, as given by the commission, does not seem to bring out the plenary provisions of the railroad officials relative to the impossibility of increasing revenues by securing authorization in order to their charges for freight and passenger service. The commission asserts that it has not considered that the law required the suspension and investigation of changes in rates, but expects the commission to exercise sound discretion in the matter. "In the ordinary course of business," the annual report states, "there are many changes in rates, involving slight reductions and advances, to which no objection is made on the part of the shipping public, and which do not seem to warrant suspension and investigation by the commission, and are therefore, permitted to become effective. Generally speaking, important air advances in rates are made the subject of protest by shippers." Since June, 1912, when the new rate law first became effective, freight rates advances proposed by the railroads have been denied in thirty-two cases, have been wholly or partly allowed in forty-five cases, and in twenty-two cases the advances requested were voluntarily withdrawn by the carriers. During the past calendar year, the commission has condemned proposed advances in 129 cases where protests have been made by shippers, and has declined to interfere in 112 similar cases.

This record of the commission seems to fully substantiate its own assertions in this report and in previous decisions. Permission has been given to increase rates in more than twice as many cases as it has refused to do so. The commission's record is a record of failure. It has failed to protect the shipping public from unjust advances in freight rates. It has failed to enforce the law which requires it to suspend and investigate any advance in rates. It has failed to protect the shipping public from unjust advances in freight rates. It has failed to enforce the law which requires it to suspend and investigate any advance in rates. It has failed to protect the shipping public from unjust advances in freight rates. It has failed to enforce the law which requires it to suspend and investigate any advance in rates.

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It has been refused. In addition to these formal decisions, a great number of advances have gone into effect without protest from shippers or action by the commission. There would seem to be every reason for thinking that the carriers will have no difficulty in securing authorization to increase their freight charges, provided they can show that they are really in need of additional revenues to meet operating expenses and capital requirements.

HOME CHRISTMAS FOR TRAVELERS.

It isn't always the poor who have the least fun Christmas. Sometimes it is the man who is away from home, a stranger in a strange land, with a rough too deep for words, and nobody to share even a good dinner with. Traveling men, for example, have to face a lot of lonely holidays and lose a lot of the joy of home feasts. So, the Richmond Chamber of Commerce is doing a big-hearted, hospitable stunt in arranging for a banquet to the traveling men who represent Richmond.

In the first place, they deserve it. In the second place, they will appreciate it. In the third place, well, in the third place, everybody will have a fine time. And that is what Christmas is for.

The traveling man is likely to be overlooked as a prime factor in the prosperity of a city. He is out on the road getting the trade and doing the boosting and spreading the fame and glory of his home town, so he hasn't much chance at blowing his own horn. He does not get much publicity himself, because he is too busy getting it for his goods and his town. He isn't the showy flowers of the business tree, but he is the vital roots that run out in all directions to get the nourishment that supports the whole plant. When he does get home, then, for a week at Christmas, it is up to the home-stayers to see that he is repaid for some of those long jumps in a day coach, and those barren Sundays in the tank towns with nothing to do but write lonesome letters home.

The traveling man doesn't get much home life. His kids grow up without him; his friends forget his existence; he lives in a suitcase, and gets his welcome after a hard day from a bell boy or a hotel clerk. Yet most of them are good sports—with the ready smile and the quick-opening pocket-book to the hard-luck story. They carry the Christmas spirit of faith and good will along through the whole year. Let's see to it that the home town shows its appreciation.

THE HIGHWAYS MUST BE MAINTAINED.

If good roads are to be built, they must be maintained. The Hampton Monitor realizes the need of upkeep in declaring that "a great mistake has been made in the road-making plan of the Commonwealth in disregarding the fact that a fund for keeping the roads in order was absolutely necessary." At the time when the present road plan was being formulated the satisfying argument was made that, if permanent highways were built, the counties could surely maintain them properly. Experience confutes that argument, for six years after the system went into operation it is found that the counties will not or cannot keep up the improved public roads.

If the highways that have been constructed are not maintained, then the entire expenditure upon them will amount to utter waste. The State must, therefore, devise a method of maintenance so that the funds which it has invested in better roads shall not be dissipated. The Monitor, whose editor is an experienced legislator, holds the correct opinion that "some means must be devised at the next Legislature looking to maintenance of roads." The General Assembly will be compelled to protect the State by requiring the preservation of which it has assisted. The simplest plan is to enact a statute which shall require that a certain per cent of all money devoted by the State to highway building shall be reserved for the maintenance of the roads built. The Richmond-Washington Highway plan included such a provision.

The conditions which exist constitute a road to the counties, and if a county secures State aid for road building, surely it ought to be able to maintain the roads. The upkeep of highways is really a local and not a state problem, a local and not a state duty. Unless the counties will cooperate more effectively with the State, the State may be forced to withdraw its aid to counties seeking better highways.

SERVIA'S INVITATION.

The most significant and important bit of news regarding the peace conference yet received is that the Serbian delegates have declared a willingness to submit to the great powers or adjustment the issues between Serbia and Austria-Hungary.

If Austria-Hungary accepts the invitation and will agree to meet Serbia halfway, as doubtless she will, now that course would afford her an opportunity to save her face and evade her liability and thereby win the least possible loss of prestige about the last apprehension of an international conflict will have been dissipated.

This will remain true, whether the Balkan allies and Turkey fall to terms, and hostilities between them are resumed or not.

Servia's declaration puts Austria-Hungary morally on the defensive, absolves her two partners in the treachery from any obligation to support her claims, and it would seem to

leave these and the triple entente no alternative short of combining, if necessary, to force acceptance.

Indeed, it places Germany and Italy equally, morally, on the defensive with their ally, in so far as the last named may have counted on their sustaining her in her demands respecting Servia.

A MAGICAL WANT AD.

At a recent Ad Club banquet in Denver, Dr. H. Wood Avery, author of many advertising monographs, concluded his address with a story which bears true witness to a well-known fact: "The power of the ad is miraculous. I know a young actress who mislaid a string of pearls. She inserted a 'lost and found' advertisement, and the next day I asked her: 'Well, did you get your pearls back?' 'Yes,' she answered, 'and isn't advertising wonderful! The pearls lost were imitation, but those that have been returned to me are the real thing.'"

It pays to advertise.

THE REAL ISSUE.

The debate on the Burnett bill, which provides for a limitation on immigration by a literacy test, has been made the occasion for much impassioned oratory, and for the enunciation of a vast amount of political bombast. A constant effort has also been made to confuse the main point of the discussion by attacking the literacy test. The vital question is not whether illiterate aliens shall be barred. The real issue is whether or not we shall have restriction. The basic reason for limiting the number of immigrants who annually reach our shores is to be found in the unfavorable industrial conditions in the North and West, which have been caused by the constant influx of a cheap and undesirable labor supply. The reduction in numbers of this annual addition to our labor forces would not only be advantageous to the native American, but also a benefit to the aliens already in our midst, and even to those who contemplate establishing themselves in this country in the future. No one should be led astray in reaching a decision upon this problem by a discussion of the merits of the literacy test as a method of restriction.

The representatives from the Southern States are to be congratulated upon their attitude. No other section of the country is in greater need of labor than the South, but our people wisely believe that real industrial and commercial progress will be best developed by labor forces which are not only efficient and well selected, but which will possess qualifications which will permit them to be adapted to the political and social institutions of the Southern States. As a matter of fact, the opposition to a restriction of immigration from the manufacturing States of the North and Middle West is not so much due to a public opinion in these sections favorable to a liberal immigration policy as to reasons of political expediency. The congressional districts in these States have a large number of foreign voters, and a considerable number of members of Congress do not wish to commit political suicide by arousing the antagonism of these naturalized citizens.

Maybe the Governor and Mr. Bryan might write to the Ladies' Home Journal and find out who should call on whom first.

That Socialist who spent 2 cents on his campaign for Congress got stung.

It's too late for early Christmas shopping. Everybody's doing it now.

Fireworks and fire water have taken the place of peace and good will in a good many people's Christmas plans.

New York has done wisely to set aside \$5,000 for the purchase of Edgar Allan Poe's cottage at Fordham. In the estimation of the world, he is a bigger glory than any millionaire the metropolis ever produces. Moreover, he enabled New York to have a Hall of Fame. It was the exclusion of Poe that called attention to the inclusion of anybody else in that futile institution. A genius big enough to inspire a Hall of Fame by his defeat might reasonably be worth expending \$5,000 on.

Woodrow Wilson is becoming a diplomat. He has also made a phrase. The tale runs thus: "Senator Overman came with a generous lot of representations in support of Mr. Daniels for the postmaster-generalship," said the Governor, and added abruptly: "Then Sam Gordon cut my hair."

"Then Sam Gordon cut my hair" is homely, but efficient. It is democratic, but subtle. A man getting his hair cut cannot do much but think. Therefore, he was thinking it over. We getchu, Steve!

President Taft went through Richmond asleep. He has gone through lots of other things in the same condition.

It is to be hoped that Santa Claus will not attempt any fancy volplaning or spiral glides with the Christmas gift aeroplane.

The Bulgarian peace envoys must use some trouble in telling which is which.

"Mrs. Laura Gaston Young, the belle of Peachy Creek, dropped in on a correspondent last Saturday and left us a mass of articles, a persimmoned poem and enough red peppers and 'sweet taters' to season and trim the vermin." Call again, Wingless Scorpion, writes a correspondent of the *Richmond News-Sentinel*.

On the Spur of the Moment.

By Roy K. Moulton.

Noah Webster Down to Date.
Liar—Any man who does not agree with you in politics.
Liberty—Something that bachelors and spinsters have.
Lingerie—Something that you see advertised in the papers.
Linoleum—A floor covering that is supposed to look like tile, but doesn't fool anybody.
Liver—A food used by the very rich.
Lizard—One who belongs to the opposite political party.
Lobster—Party who believes it when the young woman tells him he is the only man she ever kissed.
Lockjaw—An affliction that never happens to the feminine sex.
Loom—Young gent who writes love letters.

According to Uncle Abner.

Anse Frisby, our banker, says it is harder to break into society than to break out of jail. He ought to know. He has tried both.

I often wonder what the Turks do when they are not fighting.

Hank Tumms says he is going to get his wife a sewing machine next spring. A sewing machine.

The man who used to have a barn has put a gasoline can behind it and called it a garage.

There is one thing that no man ever made a success of, and that is the drink habit.

What would a suffragist think of her husband if he paid \$15 for a \$2 hat with a rooster's tail stuck on it?

They tell us that civilization is advancing by leaps and bounds, but we note there are still a good many men who wear red neckties.

There are but few fellows in this country who never smitten with the charms of the village milliner.

A fellow never knows as much at any other period of his life as he does when he is twenty-one years old.

No man knows what trouble is until he buys a second-hand sewing machine for his wife and tries to pawn it off on her for a new one.

Grandpa Bibbins is the oldest man in our town, I guess. He says he can remember back when tomatoes were called "love apples" and was thought to be plsen.

A man who never changes his mind ain't got any mind to change.

The loudest talkers are the poorest fighters.

There ain't no fellow who is more optimistic than one who orders hash in a dining car when there is anything else in sight.

About the only place a fellow kin buy a box of figs nowadays is on the train.

It ain't no railroad trip at all to some fellows unless they kin keep their head stickin' out of the car window.

When a couple kin agree when to have the bedroom window up and when to have it down there ain't much danger of a divorce.

Voice of the People

A Defender of Mr. Bryan.

To the Editor of the Times-Dispatch: Sir—The editor of the Roanoke Times, in his editorial November 8 and 25, is opposed to the Hon. William Jennings Bryan being recognized by President-Elect Wilson in his Cabinet. The editor says he hopes Mr. Bryan himself will have the good taste and judgment to withdraw from any consideration as part of Mr. Wilson's Cabinet, as Mr. Bryan has been rejected three times for President; that Mr. Bryan's influence in the Baltimore convention did not nominate Governor Wilson, as Mr. Bryan had instructions to vote for Speaker Clark. Mr. Bryan proved to be an honest delegate to his constituency and to his State, as the editor—November 26—says Mr. Bryan voted for Clark thirteen ballots, until it was evident that Clark could not win. Then Mr. Bryan saw that Clark had pulled all his strength in the convention, and that some of the delegates were leaving the convention for their homes, and that the convention was on the eve of being wrecked, like the Republican convention at Chicago. Mr. Bryan took in the situation and drew the line between the delegates for the people and the delegates under the influence of the corporations, trusts and the money power in the convention. Mr. Bryan said, after he had drawn the line, as long as the money agents and the ninety delegates from New York, who represented the corporations and the money power, voted for Clark, that he would withhold his vote from Clark. It was then plain to the delegates who were for the people that William Jennings Bryan had taken sides with them and against the delegates who were for the people. The delegates who were for the people saw Mr. Bryan had left Clark, the delegates for the people commenced going over to Woodrow Wilson and nominated him. Mr. Bryan was the only delegate in the convention that made the issue to draw the line in the convention for the people and to save the Democratic party from being split and wrecked. I do not believe the editor and his political associates from Virginia understood Mr. Bryan's resolution. Mr. Bryan's object was to draw the line in the convention between the delegates, and the reason he put Virginia in his resolution was that he saw that Editor Williams and his political associates from Virginia were associating with the millionaires of New York, and that his resolution would force the editor and his political associates from Virginia to show their colors for or against the people. I

Abe Martin



THE CHRISTMAS SAMARITAN.

By John T. McCutcheon.

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use the word force, as Governor William H. Mann, who was a delegate to the convention, and when he got back to Richmond said he was forced to vote for Bryan's resolution. I was sorry to see the Governor of Virginia, one of Virginia's best Governors, and the editor get in such a political row in the Baltimore convention as to allow William Jennings Bryan to force the Governor and the editor to vote for his resolution. Some of the editor's political associates said Bryan with his resolution was trying to destroy the Democratic party. One of the editor's associates said Governor Wilson had done nothing for the Democratic party but help wreck the party. I ask the editor and his political associates from Virginia the following question: If Mr. Bryan was not right with his resolution and speech in the convention that saved the Democratic party, why did you, Mr. Editor, and your political associates from Virginia vote for Bryan's resolution? Why did you, Mr. Editor, and your associates from Virginia, after Mr. Bryan's resolution change, and vote for Woodrow Wilson, to whom you and your associates were so bitter opposed to Wilson in the start in the Norfolk and the Baltimore convention? The truth is, Mr. Editor, Mr. Bryan caught you and your political associates from Virginia in a trap that forced you and your associates to vote for his resolution and Woodrow Wilson. The truth is that you and your associates from Virginia's political heads were so when you ran up against William Jennings Bryan in the Baltimore convention. Like the great Titanic did against the iceberg, and sunk into the mighty deep to rise no more, and when the editor's political machine from Virginia ran up against Mr. Bryan in the Baltimore convention his machine busted, like the Titanic, and sunk in the pool of politics to rise no more in Virginia. Mr. Editor, you and your political associates from Virginia were sinking. The editor was sinking. Mr. Bryan saw the editor sitting on the starboard of his machine, and he thought at first the editor was a stevedore, and later took the editor to be a steam passenger instead of a Virginia delegate to the Baltimore convention. Mr. Bryan gave orders to take the editor in his political life, and in the Baltimore convention, and for the editor to be shipped back to Roanoke, Va., with his great ability and as one of the best editors in Virginia to advise President-Elect Wilson whom to appoint in his Cabinet.

William Jennings Bryan, when the editor is opposed to being a member of Governor Wilson's Cabinet, because Bryan has been defeated three times for President, got a larger popular vote the third time he was a candidate for President than any other candidate for President. He got 236,434 more popular votes than Governor Wilson. Still the editor in his manic political dream thinks the people would not be satisfied if President Wilson were to appoint Mr. Bryan a member of his Cabinet. Keep quiet, Mr. Editor, you or some of your associates, who distinguished themselves as great statesmen in the Baltimore convention from Virginia, might not get the appointment as a member of William Jennings Bryan's Cabinet, as Mr. Bryan will be the next President after President Wilson. A. J. TAYLOR, Palmyra.

The Wednesday Club's Work.

To the Editor of the Times-Dispatch: Sir—All thanks to Douglas Gordon for his able review of the Wednesday Club's rendition of "The Messiah." As one of the club's organizers and a hard worker for it for years, I wish to plead for more of the same kind of music. As Mr. Gordon says, the club was organized for the study of the great choral works. Last spring it was said the Wednesday Club hoped to hear a week of grand opera, speaking of it as a highly prized goal. Grand opera is not the aim of a choral society, and although personally very fond of grand opera, I hope

Clean the Streets.

To the Editor of the Times-Dispatch: Sir—Is Herr Cohn, chief of the Street Cleaning Department, taking his vacation? Evidently he is or he has suddenly been stricken blind, because no man who is the head of the department that he grades would permit Main Street to remain in such a filthy condition as it is unless he could not see.

Automobiles going through the streets not only spatter the mud upon the pedestrians on the sidewalks, but besmear the show windows with filth. Men find it necessary to roll up their trousers to save them from the mire as they cross the street, while the women are helpless creatures and their dresses are ruined.

On behalf of the business men along Main Street and in behalf of the business women and women shoppers, Mr. Cohn is implored to send his street cleaning gang to Main Street at once and attend thereafter.

Suggest S. C. Mitchell for V. P. I. President.

To the Editor of the Times-Dispatch: Sir—There is concern all over Virginia, wherever the facts are known, that the proper man shall be chosen as president of the Virginia Polytechnic Institute. This great institution ought to be close to the heart of every true Virginian because of the place it occupies and because of the quality of the work it has done. Many believe that it has arrived at a point where it must either go backwards or forward and that its destiny lies wrapped up largely in this election. Certainly a man is needed whose personality will count and count in the right direction. Too much is involved in having a man as president as Blackburg whose life does not count as heavily as his words; certainly this is a crucial point in our great State schools.

Many have mentioned the name of President S. C. Mitchell, of South Carolina University, and whose former work in Richmond College is so favorably known in Richmond. More than this, Dr. Mitchell probably was inspirational in practical education in Virginia as few men in her history. The Virginia Polytechnic Institute board will find difficulty in discovering a man better qualified to meet the peculiar conditions to be met at Blackburg and who can so readily increase the prestige of Dr. Mitchell in now handling with great success the

Important work of the University of South Carolina, and we can afford to offer him such inducements as will bring him back to Virginia.

Virginia's great need to-day is efficiency along agricultural lines, and if the Virginia Polytechnic Institute is to help along this line a man is needed like Dr. Mitchell, who has had a vision of this need and who knows how, as he does, to arouse the young men of the State to their opportunity. We need a man with inspirational powers, who will command attention in the institution and in the State. A FRIEND OF THE V. P. I. Warrenton.

Dr. McDaniel Writes Fins.

To the Editor of the Times-Dispatch: Sir—Your correspondent and my critic from Crewe is in error in supposing that my speech at the Howitzer banquet was delivered as a reply to his criticisms on the Attorney-General. I did not remember the gentleman's name, and had forgotten that he hailed from Crewe. He was thought of and mentioned only as a passing reference. With this we will let him pass. GEO. W. McDANIEL, Richmond.

Paraphrase of Noah Webster's Fable, "The Boy That Stole Apples."

An old man found in his apple tree a rude boy stealing his fruit; "Come down," said he to the saucy boy, plain, "But said the young thief, 'I won't do it.'"

"You won't," said he, then some turf of grass. He threw at the youngster a tree; "Ha! ha!" he laughed, "It's funny, indeed—Your turf, how it frightens me!"

"Well, then, look out," said the old man stern, "If neither words nor grass will avail, I'll try what virtue there is in stones, And that I am sure cannot fail."

And so the lad he pelted with stones—There's virtue in them, you'll agree—For ere he'd cast a handful, I vow, The chap hastened down from the tree. FRANK MONROE BEVERLY.

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